MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY

2005 - 2010
CAMPUS ACTION PLAN

Kentucky's public agenda, *Five Questions – One Mission: Better Lives for Kentucky's People,* guides the work of the entire postsecondary and adult education system over the period 2005 - 2010. It identifies the major opportunities and challenges facing the Commonwealth and presents a set of policy directions for addressing them. Each institution in the system has an action plan for advancing this agenda in keeping with the goals of House Bill 1. This action plan for Murray State University describes the university's purpose and role in the system, promulgates a set of priorities for action that responds to the five questions, and identifies the key indicators for monitoring progress over the planning period.

HOUSE BILL 1 GOAL

Murray State University shall have at least one nationally recognized program of distinction or one nationally recognized applied research program and shall work cooperatively with other postsecondary institutions to assure statewide access to baccalaureate and master's degrees of a quality at or above the national average.

Kentucky
UNBRIDLED SPIRIT™

MISSION PARAMETERS

Program Characteristics

- Strong liberal arts and sciences undergraduate core preparing students to live and work in a global society.
- Comprehensive array of baccalaureate, master's, and specialist programs, with special attention to agriculture, business, health and human services, teacher education, communications, engineering, and applied technologies.
- May offer programs beyond the master's degree to meet the requirements for teachers, educational leaders, and other certified personnel.
- May offer collaborative doctoral programs through the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville to meet state needs.
- May provide sub-associate or associate degree programs to meet local community needs in consultation with KCTCS.
- Selected number of nationally recognized graduate programs including its Program of Distinction in telecommunications systems management, as well as the Ecosystem and Reservoir Research Center of Excellence and areas of documented regional need.
- Emphasizes distinctive educational experiences geared to the specific needs and interests of students including service learning, international education, opportunities for discovery-based learning, residential colleges, and other special programs.

Student Characteristics

- Moderately selective to selective admissions with a commitment to recruiting a diverse student body including dually enrolled high school students.
- Serves the needs of traditional, nontraditional, and transfer students seeking baccalaureate and advanced degrees.
- Recruits students nationally and internationally to increase intellectual capital and diversity.

Research

- Engages in applied research and scholarly activities that support the primary function of instruction and supplement efforts to improve economic and community development, with an emphasis on ecosystems, reservoir management, telecommunications, agriculture, entrepreneurship, and teaching pedagogy.
- Achieves national distinction for applied research through its Program of Distinction in telecommunications systems management and in targeted areas of opportunity.

Stewardship of Place

- Serves as a provider or coordinator of education services to meet the economic and community needs of its designated area of geographic responsibility.
- Collaborates with entrepreneurs, business leaders, local and state officials, and citizens to identify and respond to regional needs for research, commercialization, and the workforce.
- Works directly with schools and educational agencies to improve teacher quality and student performance in its designated area of geographic responsibility.
- Places a high premium on academic outreach, collaborative relationships with alumni, the public schools, business and industry, governmental agencies, and other colleges and universities at home and abroad.

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Question 1: Are more Kentuckians ready for postsecondary education?

To support the preparation of high school graduates and working-age adults for postsecondary education and to strengthen the preparation and development of P-12 and adult educators, Murray State University will:

Improve the quality of P-12 education in the region by producing a supply of strong, qualified teachers through increased collaboration between arts and sciences and education faculty in educator preparation and professional development programs, and provide for the retraining and updating of skills for in-service teachers through the Teacher Quality Institute.

Expand Murray State's highly successful Roads Scholars program, which brings faculty into high school and middle school classrooms in the university's service region and target counties.

Develop and implement a high school bridge program allowing area high school seniors to take one course per semester at reduced tuition rates.

Work on curriculum alignment with area schools with special emphasis on core content alignment with MuSU's English and mathematics courses. Make the high school curriculum more rigorous to better prepare students for postsecondary education through P-16 initiatives such as Kentucky's ongoing work in the American Diploma Project.

Expand the enrollment of the Commonwealth Honors Academy that prepares top high school juniors for college life by providing residential and classroom experiences resulting in a jump start for college degree attainment.

Work with adult education services in providing GED preparation, testing, and counseling to further these students' transition and advancement in Kentucky postsecondary education.

Question 2: Is Kentucky postsecondary education affordable for its citizens?

To keep college affordable, Murray State University will:

Create operational efficiencies through a rigorous academic program productivity review process in order to keep tuition affordable.

Lower the cost of attendance by increasing academic offerings at regional campuses located in Paducah, Hopkinsville, Madisonville, and Henderson, which provide increased accessibility for students via on-site courses and lower commuting and on-campus housing costs.

Enhance the university's outreach program to provide assistance to parents and students regarding availability of and application for financial aid.

Increase scholarships, need-based grants, and student work-study opportunities available to students in the MuSU service region.

Speed time-to-degree by progressively streamlining the curriculum and reducing undergraduate degree requirements from 128 to 120 credit hours.

Partner with GEAR UP grant schools in the MuSU service region to offer a special scholarship program aimed at middle school students, guaranteeing that upon completion of the GEAR UP program and subsequent graduation, a renewable scholarship will be available for the students at Murray State University.

Conduct student and public forums to make students, parents, and the public aware of financial aid, tax incentives, and other opportunities that maintain the relative affordability and accessibility of a Murray State University education.

Question 3: Do more Kentuckians have certificates and degrees?

To enroll more students, produce more graduates, keep graduates in Kentucky, attract highly educated adults to the state, and encourage workers to retool and retrain over their lifetimes, Murray State University will:

Expand the availability of the bachelor of independent studies (BIS) on the Kentucky Virtual University and MuSU online platforms and increase MuSU program options available through the Kentucky Virtual University to include education, business, and occupational safety and health.

Enhance the MuSU First-Year Experience program to include resources for additional monitoring, follow up, and advising for first-year students.

Establish an independent undergraduate academic advising center for students with undeclared majors and uncertain academic plans to assist them in career and educational planning.

Improve the advising network through user-friendly, Web-based software to provide better information for faculty and students.

Expand the operation of the Career Discovery Center through the addition of adult education services to assist with retooling and retraining the workforce in the MuSU service region.

Place a greater emphasis on attracting and enrolling students from KCTCS to pursue degrees beyond the certificate and associate level. This involves enhancing articulation agreements, increasing 2+2 programs, and expanding the BIS completer degree program.

Expand opportunities for environmental and electrical engineering degrees in the region through cooperative agreements with the University of Kentucky and the University of Louisville.

Question 4: Are college graduates prepared for life and work in Kentucky?

To improve the quality of student learning, Murray State University will:

Enhance the Residential College program, which increases the student's sense of inclusion and engagement, reinforces the institution's emphasis on leadership and decision-making, and integrates faculty involvement in college life outside of the classroom and laboratory.
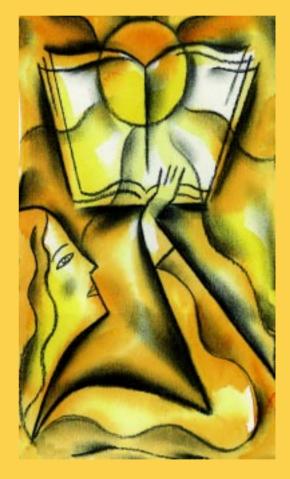
In cooperation with the American Democracy Project and the American Humanics program, establish a Center for Service Learning and expand the Service Learning Scholars program to provide for more civic engagement opportunities for students.

Expand the Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Activity program to reach more students involved in a discovery-learning environment.

Implement the SACS-approved Quality Enhancement Plan to assess and document student achievement of the "Characteristics of the Murray State Graduate."

Increase opportunities for students to learn about other cultures and languages consistent with the changing demographics of Kentucky and the United States and to experience working and studying in an environment rich with cultural diversity.

Expand service learning opportunities and student internship opportunities.

Question 5: Are Kentucky's people, communities, and economy benefiting?

To support economic and community development and address the specific needs and challenges of its service area, Murray State University will:

Establish a Regional Center for Emerging Technologies in cooperation with the Small Business Development Centers to stimulate economic development through launching new technology-based businesses and supporting entrepreneurship in western Kentucky.

In cooperation with KCTCS, expand noncredit community education course offerings and increase offerings suitable for adults in the region.

Prepare students for careers in the new economy by emphasizing academic programs in relevant disciplines.

Provide additional support for faculty to seek applied research dollars and for service involvement of faculty in activities that will benefit businesses, agriculture, and technology-based industries in western Kentucky.

Engage in partnerships to promote and increase participation in the arts and cultural activities of the region in cooperation with the Four Rivers Center (new performing arts center located in Paducah).

KEY INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

QUESTION 1
Are more Kentuckians ready for postsecondary education?

- Quality of teacher preparation programs

QUESTION 2
Is Kentucky postsecondary education affordable for its citizens?

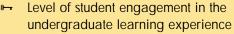- Net cost of attendance as a percent of average family income

QUESTION 3
Do more Kentuckians have certificates and degrees?

- Undergraduate enrollment
- Graduate enrollment
- Number of students transferring to the university from KCTCS
- Six-year graduation rate of baccalaureate students
- Number of degrees and other credentials awarded
- Number of degrees and other credentials awarded to racial-ethnic minorities

QUESTION 4
Are college graduates prepared for life and work in Kentucky?

- Level of student engagement in the undergraduate learning experience
- Level of civic participation of students

QUESTION 5
Are Kentucky's people, communities, and economy benefiting?

- Extramural research and development expenditures
- Number of formal agreements for educational, applied research, or support services to business, entrepreneurs, government, and community groups
- Level of faculty/staff community involvement as extensions of their university roles

BENCHMARK INSTITUTIONS

Central Connecticut State University
Central Missouri State University
Eastern Illinois University
Eastern Washington University
Frostburg State University (MD)
Indiana State University
Northwest Missouri State University
Oakland University (MI)
Pittsburg State University (KS)
Plymouth State University (NH)

Rhode Island College
Southeast Missouri State University
Stephen F. Austin State University (TX)
The University of Tennessee-Chattanooga
The University of Tennessee-Martin
University of Montevallo (AL)
University of Nebraska-Omaha
Western Carolina University (NC)
Western Illinois University